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Identical letters dated 11 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the letter from Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated 11 May 2004, regarding the conflict in and around the Nagorno Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and a proposal that foresees, as an initial step in the settlement, the evacuation of Azerbaijan's territories currently under occupation and the restoration of transportation links in the region (see annex). This proposal, aimed at building confidence between the parties, represents a genuine attempt to reinvigorate the stalled peace process and enjoys the growing support of the international community.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 11 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am addressing you on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the ceasefire established by international mediators to put an end to active military hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which have resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives for both countries and continue to undermine security and stability in the South Caucasus region. In spite of the numerous mediation efforts undertaken by the international community thus far, in particular by the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, no real progress has been made to date in the achievement of a peaceful settlement to this "frozen" conflict; 20 per cent of Azerbaijan's territory remains under occupation, and about 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan continue to suffer from its consequences.

We appeal today to the Security Council, which in 1993 adopted four resolutions on this issue, namely resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), to encourage the international community and all parties concerned to redouble their efforts to resolve this conflict on the basis of its above-mentioned resolutions, and to implement relevant provisions contained therein regarding respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory, the immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the return of displaced persons to their places of permanent residence.

In this context, we bring to the attention of the Security Council a proposal that foresees, as an initial step in the settlement, the evacuation of Azerbaijan's territories currently under occupation and the restoration of transportation links in the region. This proposal, aimed at building confidence between the parties, represents a genuine attempt to reinvigorate the stalled peace process and enjoys the growing support of the international community.

(*Signed*) Elmar **Mammadyarov**